

The
Melville Society
N E W S L E T T E R

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With deep regret the editor (and acting secretary), at the request of Howard C. Horsford of Princeton University, announces Horsford's resignation, effective August 31, 1958, as secretary of the Society. Elected for a three-year term at the annual meeting in Madison last autumn, Horsford has found it impossible to serve. The press of work at Princeton and preparations for a foreign teaching assignment forced him to postpone acceptance of the official secretarial duties in January; he has now arrived at the conclusion that a new secretary should be elected. When this issue of the *Newsletter* appears, Horsford will have left for Italy, where he will be lecturing during the coming academic year. The question of naming a successor now stands before the executive committee. No doubt a recommendation will be presented at the next annual meeting of the Society in December.

Meanwhile, the acting secretary, who had hoped for only a very brief tenure, finds that the summer has worn away leaving him far behind in his academic

and secretarial commitments, and he is naturally eager to be relieved. This desire arises not from want of interest in or affection for the work of the Society but purely from want of time. A biography of Melville which he expected to begin writing during the summer has been put off until next year. A college textbook promised his publisher by early fall remains unfinished. Other work has rapidly accumulated and calls for immediate attention.

A new secretary is clearly needed who can devote the necessary amount of time to the business of the Society and bring out the issues of the *Newsletter* on schedule. Probably he should be someone living near the center of Melville activities and one of the newer generation of Melville scholars. The acting secretary promises to continue (with the indulgence of our members) until a successor to Howard Horsford has been chosen—but not under any circumstances after the end of the present year.

MELVILLE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The welcome word has arrived (along with sample pages) from Stuart C. Sherman, chairman of the committee on bibliography (consisting of Sherman, John H. Birss, and Gordon Roper), that a comprehensive American bibliography of Melville for the years 1952 through 1957 has been completed except for final checking. This will be extremely good news to all our members, who have been looking forward eagerly to the continuation of the annual bibliography published for 1951.

The present bibliography lists, insofar as possible, every edition of Melville and every American book and article about Melville or his works which appeared from 1952 to 1957, inclusive. A few items have been included which were unintentionally omitted from the 1951 bibliography. Attempts were made by the committee to secure publication of the list in one of the standard scholarly periodicals; in spite of considerable evidence of interest, however, these attempts all failed. After several weeks of delay during which various plans for publication were investigated, the committee finally decided upon preparation of copies by the multi-lith process. The entire bibliography will run to approximately thirty pages. According to present plans, an attractive stiff

paper cover will be provided if the cost is not prohibitive. The actual work of running off copies will be done by the staff of the Providence (R. I.) Public Library, using library equipment; our Society will pay the cost of the paper and will distribute the copies.

Each active member of the Society will receive a free copy of the bibliography through the mails as soon as it is published. Additional copies will be available at one dollar per copy. At this price copies will also be sold to associate members, libraries, and other interested persons as long as the supply lasts. Those who wish to order copies should address Tyrus Hillway (acting secretary), Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado.

Since the entire supply of the 1951 bibliography was exhausted shortly after publication, it would be well for those wishing extra copies of the new publication to place their orders early. About 300 copies will be run off, with the possibility that additional copies could be made if orders are placed within a reasonable time. Incidentally, both the 1951 bibliography and the Society's compilation of doctoral dissertations on Melville have remained in demand long after the supply was used up.

NOTES

To be published October 10: *Typee* and *Billy Budd* (in one volume), edited by Milton R. Stern, with an introduction. The text of *Billy Budd* is that of Elizabeth Treeman, slightly corrected. Stern calls this the most nearly authentic text. The book is D22 in the Dutton Everyman Paperback series (New York: E. P. Dutton). Price, \$1.75.

Recently published: *Omoo*, edited by Harrison Hayford and Walter Blair (New York: Hendricks House), in the incomplete collected edition which first began to appear in 1946. Other volumes in the series which have been announced for publication during 1959 include *Clarel*, edited by Walter E. Bezanson (\$6.00), and *Typee*, edited by Charles R. Anderson and Gordon Roper (\$4.50). Hendricks House has also listed among its forthcoming publications (1959) a *Melville Handbook* prepared by Harrison Hayford (\$4.50).

Published in July: *Typee*, with an introduction by Clifton Fadiman (New York: Bantam Books). Price, 50 cents (paperbound).

According to a recent report, the *Moby-Dick* volume in Harper's New Classics series, with an introduction by Clifton Fadiman, is out of print and will not be reissued. To teachers of American literature and Melville scholars, of course, this will prove a loss far less disappointing than that of the Willard Thorp edition, discontinued a few years ago by the Oxford University Press.

Leon Howard's biography of Melville is now being offered by the University of California Press in a paperback edition. Price, \$1.95. (It also remains available in the regular clothbound edition).

Two Melville items are offered at auction by the Parke-Bernet Galleries of New York City in a sale to be held on Wednesday afternoon, October 8. Both items are signed letters. Item 39 in the sale is described as a letter from Melville to Miss (Sophie) Van Matrie dated December 10, 1863. Item 350 is a letter from Melville to (Evert) Duyckinck, undated.

The experiences of a scholarly society in fighting against the politicians to preserve an important literary landmark are vividly described by Truman Nelson in "Walden on Trial" in the *Nation* magazine for July 19, 1958. Nelson is a member of the Thoreau Society, with which we carry on an exchange of publications.

Ralph Wilcoxon, a graduate student at

the University of California in Los Angeles, has recently compiled a bibliography of Melville translations and criticism in French, German, and Italian. Anyone interested in borrowing the list may address him at 1531 Corinth Ave. (Apt. 5), Los Angeles 25, California.

A brief description of the Melville Room at the Berkshire Athenaeum (Pittsfield) appears in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for August 30, 1958, under the title of "Literary Landmarks, USA." Other landmarks mentioned in the article are Lowell's "Elmwood," Thoreau's room in the Emerson house at Concord, and the Longfellow home in Cambridge. It will be remembered that the Berkshire Athenaeum has been designated by the Society as the official depository for its records and the gifts of members. Any member who publishes an article or book on Melville should contribute one copy to the Melville Room there.

Work still progresses on the check-list bibliography of Melville which was begun some years ago by Harrison Hayford and Gordon Roper. Final arrangements have not yet been made for publication, however. If present aspirations can be realized, the finished manuscript should be in the hands of a satisfactory publisher by the end of this year.

A translation of *Billy Budd* into Japanese by Keiichi Harada was scheduled for publication in August (presumably in Tokyo). Confirmation of its publication has not yet been received. Harada sees the work as "an indication of Melville's interest in redemption through human sacrifice."

Mrs. Katie M. Kiss is planning to include information about the origin of the Melville Society in her study of the renewal of interest in Melville after 1920.

Annette P. Lynch plans to do a critical analysis of Melville's short stories and sketches.

Is Melville scholarship gradually beginning to decline? The editor has heard the statement but refuses to believe it. There has been perhaps a welcome decline in the kind of "fringe" scholarship so prevalent in the thirties, but much good work is being done and much remains to be done in the future. Unfortunately, the reports do not always reach this office, and therefore some studies do not come to the attention of all our members. The editor would appreciate hearing from more members who know of studies now going on which have not been reported.

THE *Melville Society* NEWSLETTER
IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR MEMBERS OF THE
Melville Society, a group of literary scholars and others interested
in the life and works of Herman Melville. The Society seeks to
facilitate the exchange of information among its members, to
stimulate the study of Melville's life and works, and to encourage
literary, historical, and bibliographical research. Membership is
two dollars per year and includes all services of the Society. Asso-
ciate membership (non-voting) is one dollar per year and includes
all issues of the Newsletter. Address Tyrus Hillway, acting sec-
retary, at Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado.